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Dear parents and carers,

We wrote to you yesterday to make you aware that the academy would be closed this week to all except vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

Yesterday evening the Prime Minister announced that the UK's coronavirus alert level has increased due to the speed with which the new variant of the virus is spreading and is now at five, the highest level, which means that there is a risk of healthcare services being overwhelmed. A new national lockdown will be in place from Wednesday 6 January. The Government instruction is to stay at home, with extreme measures enforced by law, while vaccines are rolled out.

All Primary and Secondary schools and colleges in England will be closed until February half term (Monday 22 February).

We will provide blended and remote learning to be completed at home for all other children. As mentioned earlier, WordPress sites will be used tomorrow with live options available from Wednesday onward. Instructions and directions will be communicated to you via your Dojo class pages by teachers.

We understand that the rise in infection rates and the current pressure on the NHS may be causing you worry, we are worried too and we are here to listen and support as we find our way through this difficult period.

We will be on the gate tomorrow to greet those who have taken up the offer of a place because they fall into one of the above two groups. When we greet you we will be checking that you don't have any symptoms of Covid by asking you if you have a temperature, have a cough or have lost your sense of taste or smell. Please don't be offended by this question - we will be asking everybody this question who comes on site from now on.

We very much want to keep the spirit of the Summerhill alive both on site and at distance. The Summerhill team has worked hard all day today to ensure that planning, provision and an excellent curriculum offer is in place for your children and we can't wait to touch base with you all in the coming days about what we have planned.

Keep going Summerhill - we've got this!

Kate Richardson
Executive Principal